

South East Regional Assembly Select Committee on Manufacturing

25th April 2005 at the RIC, 3 Cadagon Gate, London SW1

SEMTA brief on the impact of SEEDA on Manufacturing

SEMTA are the licensed Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies. The role of the Sector Skills Council is to

- **Reduce skills gaps and shortages and anticipate future needs**
- **Improve productivity, business and public service performance**
- **Increase opportunities to boost the skills and productivity of everyone in the sector**
- **Improve learning supply, including apprenticeships, higher education and national occupational standards.**

SEMTA is one of only four Sector Skills Councils who have been funded by Government to produce a Pathfinder Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) for Aerospace, Automotive, Electronics and Bioscience. The Treasury have also funding a dedicated Sector Skills Agreement for the Marine Sector. SSAs are a key feature of Government policy on improving education, skills, productivity and performance.

Key Issues from the Pathfinder Sector Skills Agreement for Aerospace, Automotive, Electronics and Bioscience

Ensure the right person is trained in the right skills at the right time by giving clear information to the provider network

- Provide progression and transferability routes within and between sectors.
- Deliver timely upskilling in bite-sized chunks.
- Develop the capability of providers to have abilities in the right skill areas.

Optimise the best return for the investment made by using effective information, advice and guidance

- Diagnosis using 'Business to Skills Models' that provide predicted measures of success.
- Selection of appropriate providers with the abilities in the skill areas predicted.
- Design of the training product and process to deliver what is needed (WiN), just in time (JiT).
- Funding to the right level using a mixture of private and public funds.
- Evaluation of the outcomes against predicted measures of success, particularly in terms of productivity and competitiveness.

Take more control of the solutions to employee skill needs

- Prioritise and translate skills issues into actions to fill gaps and shortages.
- Share best practice throughout the sector to develop the workforce.

Help the transition from supply side push to demand side pull by working with the Government

- Make skills partnerships work across the UK.
- Support the development of the supply side infrastructure and its products.
- Expand the network of learning provision to deliver targeted vocational excellence.
- Fund bite-sized chunks of learning for ‘any age’ upskilling

Engage with key stakeholders

- Use public and private funding effectively.
- Share best practice between sectors.
- Achieve best use of academic, professional and vocational development.

The White Paper published on the 22nd March, ‘Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work’ states that “effective Sector Skills Agreements will provide the basis for agreement by the respective funding councils to use their funding powers to shape the supply of skills from further and higher education to meet employer and employee needs”.

SEEDA have responded to SEMTA to ensure they are contributing effectively to the issues raised within the Sector Skills Agreement.

SEMTA/ SEEDA Activity to date

SEMTA Secondment to SEEDA for last three years. Key activities undertaken include:

- CoVE development and sharing of best practice, providing advice and support.
- Advanced Engineering Group work.
- LSC strategy activity for Surrey and Hampshire.
- Automotive Academy liaison.
- Sector representation and partnership activity with EEF, BMF and other key regional stakeholders.
- Delivery of the Adult Learning Pilot objectives through the workforce skills programme – employer engagement, brokerage and networking.
- Working with HEIs to support graduate recruitment and retention in the region.
- “Hotdesking” arrangements with SEEDA and the LLSCs has allowed for a ‘surgery’ concept enabling direct contact with WBL and Workforce Development teams, liaison with Employer Bodies, EBPs, LEAs, GTAs etc. Working alongside the Sector Skills Development Managers to address regional and local issues and give a broader dimension to resulting initiatives.

SEMTA representation is given to the following groups:

- Advanced Engineering Group
- Aviation, Aerospace & Defence Strategy Group
- Aviation Maintenance Group
- Lean Manufacturing (SEEDA Lean)
- Marine Engineering Skills Project
- Adult Apprenticeship and Skills Passport Proposals
- Rapid Prototype Computer Modelling
- Sector Skills Forum
- Workforce Pooling
- Composites, Polymers and Laminating Group (Cowes Marine Cluster)

Impact of the above:

- Joined up thinking/working and sector representation in strategy.
- Success in engaging with key stakeholders and establishing/maintaining important links between industry and Government, resulting in some key projects providing significant benefits for employers within the sector.

SEEDA response to the SEMTA Pathfinder Sector Skills Agreement

Outline of possible actions/activities under each of the four key 'Business to Skills Issues'.

Key themes for future action:

- Development of Clusters in the SE that address generic engineering/science/technology skills.
- Continuing support for L3 jumpers.
- Supply Chain Management and BIT.
- Apprenticeships and flexible models of workforce development.
- Driving the demand for skills and increasing productivity.
- Work with bio and healthcare technology sectors on labour and skills supply.
- Brokering solutions to maintain the UK electronics design capability.

The DTI have also responded nationally with the Manufacturing Advisory Service to agreed support for a more coherent link on their activities, linked to employer skills development.